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WRL News

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Draft Registration to Resume

WRL Collects Signatures of 10,000 Pledging Resistance

By Grace Hedemann

On June 12 the Senate, overcoming a filibuster, voted 58 to 34 to give the Selective Service an extra $13 million so that registration of 19 and 20 year old males could begin.

Mark Hatfield (R-OR) led the opposition on the Senate floor. His filibuster attempt lasted five days, at one point going 31 hours straight, with various Senators offering amendments to the bill. All the amendments were defeated, including one which would have required the Selective Service to place a box on the registration form for registrants to indicate whether or not they were conscientious objectors. Because the Senate and House versions differed by $10,000, it was sent back to the House, which is expected to pass it. President Carter will sign the bill immediately afterwards.

Registration Procedure

The Selective Service System (SSS)

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Set Back for Weapons Lab

Conversion Project Permitted Display of Anti-Bomb Literature

Special to WRL News.

SAN FRANCISCO—The Lawrence Livermore Labs (LLL) was ordered to allow space for display of anti-nuclear weapons literature in the LLL Visitors Center.

On June 10, Judge Robert Bostick of the Alameda County Superior Court

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Armed Forces Day Parade Disrupted

A medic float going up Fifth Avenue in the Armed Forces Day Parade in front of VVAW protesters on May 17. (see story on page 8). Photo by Ed Hedemann.

WRLers Attacked on "Loyalty" Day

New Morgantown Local Forms

By Dennis Wainstock

MORGANTOWN—Over a dozen members and sympathizers attend the weekly meetings of Morgantown West Virginia's newly revived and active WRL chapter. Although barely three months old, we have been very busy. Both downtown and at West Virginia University campus, we have set up literature tables, pushed anti-draft petitions, distributed leaflets on tax resistance, held vigils for peace and disarmament, marched against the draft, and helped sponsor an anti-draft forum with such noted participants as Jim Peck and Jack Calhoun. As it turned out, however, our most exciting and dangerous demonstration occurred on May 1.

For the past three months, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP) had helped to create a potentially explosive atmosphere for May 1. They had spray painted on countless buildings, bridges, and sidewalks the slogan "May Day 1980" as well as getting news coverage because of scuffles and street confrontations. One local newspaper played up the RCP connection with May Day with a front page headline: "The Left Comes Out of the Closet." Morever, the article falsely accused the RCP of responsibility for several local bombings.

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expects to begin registration of the four million men by the end of July.* The SSS plans to inform these men of their registration "obligation" with what they hope will be *free* ads provided by the mass media. The procedure will involve filling out a registration form at the post office. No registration cards will be issued. Selective Service will store all information by computer, and letters will be sent to all registrants to confirm their registration. The registration will span two weeks with those born in 1961 registering the first week and those born in 1960 registering the second week. If someone fails to register during the two week period, they technically will be in violation of the law. However, according to Bernard Rostker, Director of Selective Service, the post offices have been asked to allow late registration.

Eligible young men will remain in the draft registration pool until their 27th birthday. There are four primary steps to the draft process: registration, examination, classification, and induction. Though Carter does not now have the authority to order inductions, he could begin examination and classification. Should the draft begin, the primary grounds for exemption will be medical, hardship, divinity or ministerial, or conscientious objection.

Penalties for failure to register are five years in jail and/or $10,000. These are the same penalties as during the Vietnam War when over 600,000 violated the draft law. Ultimately, only one half of one percent of those who broke the law during the Vietnam War spent time in prison. Of those, half spent six months or less behind bars and most of the rest served less than two years.

Resistance

The WRL petitions (on the draft) collected signatures from approximately 10,000 people pledging resistance. These were given to Barry Lynn, Chairman of the Committee Against Registration and the Draft (CARD), to give Congress an idea of what to expect if they passed the registration appropriation. The petitions are still being collected for upcoming events.

The War Resisters League and other anti-draft groups are preparing the anti-draft registration activities for the two-week registration period. On May 31 in Washington, D.C., CARD (a broad lobby-oriented anti-draft coalition formed last year) held an all day conference attended by 150 organizers to discuss strategy and tactics for the registration period and following months. On the West Coast a similar conference was held June 7-8, attracting about 200 people. Agreement was reached at both meetings to hold a week of activities against registration around the country from October 12 to 18, and a national conference after the general elections.

The National Resistance Committee (a coalition formed this year to promote nonregistration and nonviolent resistance) held press conferences in six cities on June 18 to announce the resistance activities that will take place during the two weeks of registration. The National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors, the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, and the American Friends Service Committee are conducting training sessions for draft counselors across the country. Already many young men and women are declaring themselves COs with the above organizations or local churches.

In response to the Senate vote, the League issued a national press release with the WRL statement on the draft. As a result of this, an article in the *New York Times* quoting League staff, and other sources, the national office has been flooded with calls from radio stations from around the country and CBS network TV taping interview. In addition, the staff and other WRL members have spoken at high schools, colleges, and community meetings throughout the Spring.

WRL/West as part of the Registration Education Committee is organizing vigils, pickets, and tabling at San Francisco area post offices during the registration period. Leaflets will urge potential registrants to consider alternatives to registration, provide basic information about conscientious objection, and urge attendance at local "rap" sessions. In many areas the key dates for teach-ins, mass rallies and civil disobedience actions will take place the first Monday of registration and the last two Fridays of the registration weeks at the post offices.

Since it it clear that the Administration is using the registration as indication as to whether the next steps towards the draft can be taken, it is essential we mount the strongest and most visible opposition possible. Therefore, all WRL members are urged to participate in local activities against draft registration. The Selective Service anticipates a 2% non-registration rate. The ACLU anticipates a 4% rate. Ramsey Clark suggests 10% is more realistic. This means from 80,000 to 400,000 young men are not expected to voluntarily join the draft pool. Currently, there are only 24,000 in Federal prisons in the country. It is conceivable that if we are successful, either the whole system will be jammed or the Administration will have to end the moves toward the draft.

Grace Hedemann is on the WRL national staff.

* *Next January, 18 year old males would be registered.*

Prisoners Rights Walk

Focus Attention on Human Rights Violations in Marion Federal Pen

ST. LOUIS—Audrey Aronson Myers, of WRL and the National Committee to Support the Marion Brothers, announced plans for a 12-day "Walk with the Marion Brothers," starting September 2 in East St. Louis (Illinois) and culminating September 13 in a mass rally near the Marion prison.

Already international and national political and religious leaders have agreed to speak at the rally. Among them are Raphael Miranda, Daniel Berrigan, Ben Chavis, Audrey Myers and Larry Gara of the War Resisters League.

The walk will begin outside the US Courthouse in East St. Louis, where court cases against Marion have often languished for years. Stops for forums, speaking engagements, and other educational events will be made all along the 125-mile route. In addition, a rally will be held on Sunday, September 7, at the Menard State Prison where the Illinois death row was recently moved over the protests of civil rights, civil liberties and community groups in Illinois.

"This walk and rally signal a new, determined fight for prisoner rights in this country," said Myers in her statement.

For more information contact the St. Louis WRL, 4556A Oakland Street, St. Louis, MO 63110.

I Never Thought Of It That Way

Notes on a WRL Speaking Trip

By Igal Roodenko

The Spring 1980 tour covered the southeast, from Virginia south and east from Louisiana, Arkansas and Indiana. The tour was given much vitality—surely not intentionally—by President Carter when he reintroduced the draft.

The problem with the politics of the draft—if not the major problem, but certainly central to how we discuss it with proponents—is that public discussion leaves one with only two choices. You are either for a strong America, and therefore favor it, or else you're against it and must be some kind of red. This is less than fair to the draftable young men and their families; it hinders the search for peace and is a disservice both to humanity and to the best of America.

This last was startling to many of those I spoke with; if you want a strong country, don't you have to favor a high military budget and, if necessary, the draft? We have to deliberately break away from the simplistic political either/or thinking: those qualities of US society which most people cherish can least be defended by arms. Historical, biological and psychological evidence is clear: the more muscle you have, the less you use your brains. If the US faces great difficulties overseas, it is largely due to the country's having built up so many armaments (particularly since WWII) that we haven't been able to use the good sense we have.

Here I can only list the items without going into detail: The failure since WWII to support the freedom struggles of the peoples of the third world. The insistence by the Founding Fathers, and of the Constitution itself, on a civilian government. The long American record of resistance to militarism.

A North Carolina university professor had disagreed with some point I had made. I asked him what kind of political/military program would he advocate if had all the money and all the science he wanted and had no political opposition. Could he possibly conceive of a program which would force the Russians to be good? He had no answer.

What was supposed to be the ultimate stumper came again and again: what about the Russians? Suppose, I asked, you were the top Soviet general with the job of promoting Russian interests. You wouldn't know which way to turn because in whatever position, you'd have a major enemy at your back: you have to fear the US, NATO, and China. Whether your fears were real or imaginary, you'd need three times as many guns as the US just to begin to feel equal. .)

More important, the Russians desperately need disarmament because their economy is highly inefficient: they have to depend on the US for grain, and computers, and truck parts, and Coca-Cola. The US, on the other hand, can't afford to disarm. If even the Senate hawks felt that world tensions had eased enough to warrant cutting the armed forces by a token 5%, the immediate result would be an additional 100,000 unemployed. And we don't know what to do with the unemployed we have.

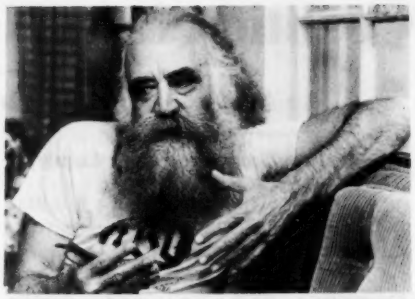
A competent General prepares for war, not against phantoms and devils, but against real people with real strengths and weaknesses, and prepares accordingly. US policy has been based on quantity rather than astuteness.

Americans rarely hear analysis based on their own patriotic assumptions. Perhaps the most favorable comment I heard, often, was: I never thought of it that way.

A young man in a religious group at a state university asked me whether I was pretty set in my ways or if there had been any major changes in my thinking in the last decade or so. An important question because movement people do tend to get rigid. I said that I now see myself more of a reconciler than a resister.

My understanding of the way to reach our goals has changed. Somehow or other, and even most non-pacifists would agree, we have at most a few decades in which to create some kind of world order in which the rules of conflict would change. Not a world in which we love each other, or at least cooperate, but one in which we engage in conflict without killing each other.

We have to develop a politics which sees the differences between rich and poor, black and white, Arab and Israeli, men and women, young and old, we have to see these differences as less important than our common humanity. We have to politicize the biblical injunction to distinguish between the sin and the sinner. We have to stop thinking of "them" as enemies. We have to apply to our politics the sensitivities and insights we try to practice in our personal relationships. And we have to develop (this is hardest) the skills of combining the firm outspokenness deriving from our outrage with the commitment to learning to live with every evil-doer on the planet. (It is indeed true that the world would be in better shape if some groups or individuals didn't exist. But if we build a politics on their elimination or control, we become like them.)



Igal Roodenko in Atlanta. Photo by Cheryl Bray of the Atlanta Constitution.

I come to a school or group for a few hours or a day or two. What may be the long-range impact of the visit cannot be predicted. But every few weeks I run into someone like the young man in Memphis who told me that he had heard me speak in '72 at a South Carolina college and that it has given him insights that have made a strong change in his life.

No one can say whether we can touch enough people, quickly enough, deeply enough, to make a difference in the life-and-death race against the global forces of destruction. Computer technologists have an earthy insight: Shit in, shit out. Our brains, fine computers that they are, act pretty much the same way: feed our brains partial or wrong data, and we get partial or wrong answers. And no one can be sure of having correct data. What we can be fairly sure of is that there is a biological drive for the survival of the species, often working in unnoticeable ways. Our lighting candles when so many others are cursing the darkness may be one expression of this biological drive. And there are others, many, many others who yearn to live these creative ways and we have to help them, and ourselves, to develop them.

Igal Roodenko is past Chairman of WRL.

Coalition for a Non-Nuclear World

An Analysis of the April 26 Rally and Coalition Structure

By Norma Becker and Nora Lumley

The WRL was among the original handful of disarmament and environmental groups that initiated the Coalition for a Non-Nuclear World in December, 1978. The goal of this Coalition was to unite the energy and weapons wings of a growing anti-nuclear movement around a mass national demonstration scheduled for April 26-28, 1980.

A year and a half of involvement in the Coalition culminated in results that are somewhat disheartening. The weekend's actions in DC were significantly smaller than anticipated. Media coverage was extremely sparse. A $60,000 indebtedness was incurred for loans advanced by individuals, unpaid staff salaries and commercial debts.

But probably most significant is the demoralization, bitterness and mutual recrimination experienced by many of the Coalition's organizers—the people whose long months of hard work and personal sacrifice resulted in an action that failed to meet anyone's expectations. Obviously the movement needs to analyze and evaluate why and how we went wrong. This article presents one perspective.

Initially some people welcomed the April 26-28 actions as an explicit experiment in "decentralized, non-hierarchical, grassroots organizing." They saw it as an alternative to the May 6, 1979 (post-TMI), action where an elitist, top-down style of organizing produced a leadership cabal of five or six people who exercised tight control.

In our view neither the May 6th nor April 26-28 actions provide an acceptable model for a movement that considers means to be as important as ends. While May 6th furnished an example of really admirable technical skill and efficiency, it was also a travesty of democratic process. It reeked of sexist arrogance and elitist modes of operating.

April 26-28, on the other hand, suffered from an abundance of ineptitude and an ongoing attempt by a small group to usurp the decision-making process and control the direction of the Coalition. The Coalition attempted to function within an ideological framework that was hostile to and distrustful of "leaders." In its effort to avoid "leaders," the Coalition never clearly defined the responsibilities of staff, secretariat (the steering committee) and task forces. This enhanced unilateral and arbitrary decision-making, and produced a frustrating absence of collective responsibility. The Coalition failed to achieve better forms of democratic management and collective control.

Professionalism (a Guise for Domination and Control)

Paul Mayer recently called our attention to a public statement by Tom Campbell, the "pro" from Pacific Alliance. Tom arrived a few days prior to April 26 to be stage manager. Afterwards, speaking of the rally in his Newsletter, Campbell maintained that, "We came in fairly late and did what we could to bail them [the Coalition] out. In fact, if it wasn't for the Farm and good ol' Pacific Alliance, it would have been a total disaster." Most of the Coalition's activists would be truly astonished at Campbell's modest claims. Just as they were shocked on the morning of the rally to discover that the stage was controlled by persons (Campbell and Phil Bloom) who had never participated in the months of deliberation, planning and organizing of the rally. Moreover, representatives from "the Farm and good ol' Pacific Alliance" brazenly ignored and violated political decisions made by the Coordinating Committee. They also seemed to be under the impression that they were charged with conducting a rock concert rather than a political event. They exerted relentless pressure on the emcees to curtail political speakers and to eliminate political announcements. What happened to the Program Task Force, the group authorized to oversee the program? Did this Task Force abdicate its responsibility or was it usurped?

Financial Mismanagement

There were many peculiarities. A $4,000 charge for stage expenses was paid without verification of its reasonableness or validity. $1,800 was paid for a room at the Park Sheraton Hotel for a fundraiser that barely covered expenses. The results of the fund collection at the rally were a big disappointment. There is still debate as to whether the money from the "third sweep" ever made it to the collection truck. Two key members of the Finance Task Force discovered the day before the demonstration that someone they never heard of was put in charge of the collection. Barrels which were to be placed along the march route (in which people on the march would put donations) were inexplicably cancelled the night before the action. When the Coalition's fundraiser went off on a vacation shortly after the demonstration, she refused to turn over the Coalition's contributors list to the remaining staff members who sought to raise money to cover the deficit.

Management of the Coalition's finances was shoddy and irresponsible; many people are convinced that extravagant, unauthorized and arbitrary expenditures were made. An "interlocking directorate" style of fiscal sponsorship was utilized. This established a conflict-of-interest type of relationship we associate more with the corporate world than with movement organizing. In addition, financial manipulation was employed to downplay the civil disobedience part of the action—notwithstanding an explicit decision made by the Coordinating Committee to give parity to the civil disobedience action. (John Schuchardt and Nora Lumley, working directly on the civil disobedience, have other detailed serious concerns regarding that operation, as well.)

Coalition for a Non-Nuclear World rally, April 26, 1980. Photo by Dorothy Marder.

Poor Structure

There were structural weaknesses to the Coalition. The Coalition devised a structure that attempted to embody principles which stressed regional input and consensus decision making. Theoretically this structure hoped to insure maximum participation and weighted representation from local grassroots groups. Such groups could not afford travel expenses to Washington, DC. But presumably they could take part more easily and directly in regional deliberations. In reality, some questionable practices occurred raising concerns about the validity of this process. For instance, did all the regional representatives who voted on matters of substance legitimately represent their constituencies? Or did they act as individuals? Were regional meetings held? If so, were they representative of groups and individuals in their region? No one knows.

A serious defect characterized the internal workings of the Coalition from its inception. There was an appalling absence of intra-staff communication, consultation and coordination. As the volume and magnitude of work intensified, the question of just how specific decisions were made, and by whom, became maddeningly difficult to answer. Particular members of the staff insisted upon working independently of the staff collective. One staff person adamantly refused to work out of the same office as the rest of the staff. For several months rent was paid for two offices.

Although this organizing effort pushed into gear in June, 1979, many essential functions did not get off the ground until late in the game. This was particularly true of promotional and political/educational materials. For the most part the quality of these resources was poor to fair. Outreach was negligible, especially in the Coalition's home base—Washington, DC.

General Evaluation

The question of the actual political unity of the Coalition and its staff is important. At least one staff member continuously violated the Coalition's major principles of political unity: linking of nuclear power and nuclear weapons, and the incorporation of a range of political tactics. This was a broad Coalition, however, linking many issues, and the strain it experienced is not in itself to be criticized. A crucial issue, however, was the deception and manipulation around these two issues on the part of some groups and individuals. The politics of the Coalition were repeatedly distorted to reflect the dissident views of an individual staff member.

The secretariat/staff dynamics were also bad. There were so-called "organizational animosities," misleadingly described as "Mobe v. the Grass roots." (The deception here is that this Coalition had few "grass roots" organizers, particularly in the earlier key positions.) Staff members professed concern for local organizers, and many national organizers were trying to relate to these concerns, but except for John Miller local organizers were not present on either the staff or secretariat for 8 out of the 10 months of organizing.

Moreover, the ability of staff people to consult with the secretariat—even if they had wanted to—was severely limited by the fact that this consulting body was scattered around the East Coast and unable to meet frequently and regularly. The staff/secretariat meetings that did occur were undermined by a sense of antagonism and confrontation. This kind of tension depleted the energies and shattered the morale of key organizers.

It is clear that no structure—whether decentralized or not—can guarantee that decisions will be made fairly. It is also clear that responsibilities and limitations of the staff and other key organizers must be clearly set forth and observed. While seeking fairness and equality in our work, we must not allow a fear of domination to leave us unprotected. Voids will always be filled by people who are not democratically chosen. Involvement in decision-making and participation would be better promoted in an organization with responsible bodies and clearly defined roles.

To be quite honest, we do not have any definitive conclusions to offer beyond this. We do know that we are entering a period of prolonged intense political/economic conflict. WRL will be called upon to participate in Coalition activities and/or national actions. We invite you to share your thoughts on what course of action you believe the League should take.

Norma Becker is the WRL Chairwoman. Nora Lumley was on staff of the Coalition for a Non-Nuclear World office in Washington, D.C.

Women's Gathering

A women's gathering, to focus on the issues of feminism, nonviolence, and the new militarism, will take place September 5-7 at the Cazadero Music Camp in Sonoma County.

Sponsored by the Feminism & Nonviolence Program of WRL/West, the weekend will provide an opportunity for women from all over the Western States to share their work and insights in the areas of nuclear disarmament, safe alternative energy, anti-draft and counter-recruitment organizing, peace conversion, war tax resistance, women's issues such as rape, battery, and employment as they relate to militarism, etc.

We will use the time together to strengthen our feminist, nonviolent analysis and strategies; further develop our networks for mutual support; and take time to relax and have fun together.

Cost for the weekend, including food, camp and registration fees is $27.50. The camp site will hold only 200, so send in your reservation now. A $10 non-refundable deposit is requested. For more information and/or to reserve your registration for the gathering, contact WRL/West, 1360 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94103, 415-626-6976.

WRL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The War Resisters League affirms that war is a crime against humanity. We therefore are determined not to support any kind of war, international or civil, and to strive nonviolently for the removal of all the causes of war.

☐ I support this statement and wish to enroll as a member of the War Resisters League.

Signature _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip ____

send to
War Resisters League
339 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012

Miami and Unemployment

The Riot in Miami's Black Ghetto Fed By Unemployment

Special to WRL News

Last month's riot in Miami, which left scores of dead and injured and reduced whole blocks in the black ghetto to burned-out rubble, came as a sobering shock to those who had supposed that such events belonged to an earlier era.

Most readers of newspapers are by now familiar with the event which apparently triggered the outbreak of violence—a white jury's acquittal of the policemen accused of fatally beating a black man and then falsifying the evidence to suggest an accident. There has also been much comment on the peculiarities of Miami's economic development which, in the past twenty years, has increasingly favored the growing number of Cuban exiles over the black community. These circumstances are reassuring to some who want to believe that what happened in Miami could not happen elsewhere.

The facts which receive little publicity, the facts which belong in any serious discussion of such questions as "why Miami, why now?", and whether these events may be a sign of what the future may hold for our major cities, are the figures which demonstrate that inspite of years of talk about civil rights, equal opportunity and affirmative action, the stake of black Americans in the economy of this country is consistently losing rather than gaining ground. For this information we acknowledge that radical newspaper, the *Wall Street Journal*: black unemployment is now 12.6%, nearly double the rate of blacks in the Sixties and twice the current unemployment rate for whites. For black youth the figure is 40%, even as much as 50% in cities like Detroit and Los Angeles. The number of blacks living below the government's poverty line has increased 15% over the past decade. As the *Journal* reports, today's ghettos are "filled with an unpredictable atmosphere of cynicism and anger mixed with disillusionment and frustration.

Behind the dramatic violence of Miami there is a hidden violence, harder to document: a toll of lives wasted and burnt out, families broken, the regular "implosion" of violence in America's ghettos that finds expression in crime, alcholism, drug addiction. Harvey Brenner, an economist at John Hopkins University, calculates that every rise of 1% in unemployment is likely to lead to an increase of 8.7% in narcotics arrests, 5.7% in robberies, 3.8% in homicide. Surely these figures are available to the Carter Administration. Perhaps it has reckoned the cost in human lives of the 1981 Federal Budget which cuts $20 billion from domestic programs such as job training, food stamps, aid for fuel bills, while increasing the Pentagon budget by a similar amount. The hard fact is that people literally die for every bomb the government builds, even if they are never used.

Responding to Miami, Mayor Koch of New York admonished the blacks of this city to "learn the lesson of the riots of the Sixties: they accomplished zero." Sadly, the same could be said of other less destructive methods. And yet those riots, as did Miami for at least a few days, accomplished something: they set the public wondering what could prompt such disaffection, even inspiring in a few instances such as the conclusions of the Kerner Commission, now 13 years old, certain moments of acute understanding (even if they were not followed by appropriate action). Those with power could no longer claim not to have been warned. After all, the black youths of America's cities may have learned a lesson from the Sixties' riots only too well: next time they may try harder.

David Berkingoff

1896 - 1980

David Berkingoff, imprisoned for being a CO in World War I, a member of WRL since the twenties, and a long time member of the WRL Executive Committee, died in New York on June 2. What follows are excerpts from a eulogy given by Arthur Nunberg and translated from Yiddish by Igal Roodenko.

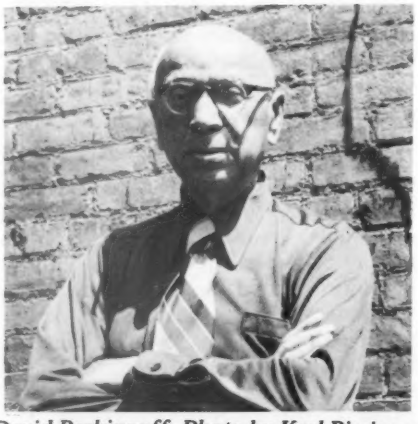
Not often does it happen that the content or name of a periodical can clearly be identified with the essence of a movement or a person. *On Watch* was the name which David had given to his bulletin. Depending solely and generously on his own meager finances—he stood "on watch." He painfully guarded universal and humanitarian values, reacting against the evils and violence which are committed against individual humans and humanity in general.

The Jew persecuted by antisemitic hordes, the tortured in Vietnam and Cambodia, the innocent Arab victims of an Israeli occupation were all to David as his own flesh and blood.

I have often wondered how he was able to develop that intransigence, in face of physical threats, with which to face a cynical world and the Zionist hysteria in the Jewish community. He was inspired by the ancient prophets who denounced the evils of the period of the destruction of the Temple despite the indifference and oppression by the powers of the time. He was inspired by the Debses and Thomases of the American Socialist Party.

As a seven-year-old child in his birth place of Vitebsk, he sneaked past the Csarist-Russian police into the local jail to provide physical comforts to the political prisoners, becoming at that early age a member of the Jewish Socialist Party. After but a few years in the United States, he resisted being drafted into the World War I army and was jailed as a pacifist. Since then, and until the last moments of his life, he remained a member of the Socialist Party.

Most recently we met at the May First celebration of the Bund, to which he had always carried a special commitment. Because of Jewish awareness and his deep commitment to Jewish humanist-secular and socialist values he was, for some time after the first World War, a teacher in the secular Yiddish schools. He rarely missed a Jewish Workers Bund meeting and it was at one such that I met him for the last time.



David Berkingoff. Photo by Karl Bissinger.

A joint WRL/SPUSA vigil on World Day in Morgantown, March 1980. Photo by Dennis Wainstock.

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For May 1, the local VFW had organized a Loyalty Day celebration. To counter the VFW's identification of patriotism with militarism, we decided to hold a silent vigil for peace and disarmament. At the same time, the RCP had changed their plans and decided to march in Charleston rather than Morgantown. The local motorcycle toughs, and high school and fraternity men, unfortunately for us, had not been forewarned of the RCP's change of plans. On May 1, they came looking for a confrontation with the RCP.

When we arrived at the courthouse square on Loyalty Day, we immediately sensed the hostile, supercharged atmosphere. Although apprehensive about initiating our vigil, we agreed after a quick conference that a show of resistance against militarism was imperative. We unfolded our banners and raised our peace placards.

At first, although unfriendly, the crowd seemed more attentive to the speakers on the platform than to us. As expected, the speakers equated patriotism with militarism and chauvinism. Pointing to our silent vigil, A.J. Manchin, West Virginia's Secretary of State, said that civil liberties were important even for people like us; but shortly thereafter, sensing the crowds displeasure at his remarks, he hurriedly explained that America's real danger was not from the outside aggressor but from the enemy alien from within; and then he shouted that these enemy aliens must be drowned out. The crowd cheered.

Next, Manchin presented a West Virginia medal of merit to a college fraternity man for his excellent service to the state and future leadership role. After the young man thanked the crowd, he raised his fist and yelled: "Death to Iran." This again brought the crowd to wild cheering; however, this time many began to look ominously our way.

After the final speech and a closing prayer, the crowd's mood suddenly became nasty and ugly. People began throwing coins, eggs, and firecrackers at us. Several of us were spit on and called subversives and communists. A policeman told the crowd that we had a right to be there, and that we were not communists. They booed him and threw a string of firecrackers at his feet. A young VFW member stepped forward and asked the crowd to calm down and to turn their backs on us if they disagreed with our views. Several responded, but most continued their harassment.

We agreed that retreat was in order; but as we turned to leave, a man grabbed one of our members and hit him several times before three policemen wrestled him to the ground. From the back entrance of the courthouse, in full riot gear, the tactical squad appeared. The police broke a path for us. We escaped down a side street, and regrouped at a local restaurant—shaken, bruised, and tired.

We received mixed press coverage. The local TV stations showed films of the hostile crowd, and Mr. Manchin contradicting himself on civil liberties; however, one newscaster referred to us as communists. Although the university paper gave us fair and balanced coverage, the local newspapers barely mentioned us, but focused instead on the wonderful turnout, the excellent speakers, and the patriotic spirit of Morgantowners.

Dennis Wainstock is a member of the Morgantown WRL and the Socialist Party.

(continued from page 1)

ruled in favor of the suit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of the University of California Weapons Lab Conversion Project. The suit asked that in addition to space being allowed for opposing literature, the Visitors Center auditorium must be available for public meetings and show the Labs Project slide show at least twice a month. Judge Bostick, citing a lack of openness by the bomb design labs, in an unexpected move ruled from the bench that the LLL was in violation of the First Amendment.

Though the Weapons Lab is appealing the decision, they have agreed to show the film "War Without Winners," honoring a request by an employee sympathetic to the Conversion Project.

The displays in the Visitors Center are mostly non-weapons related, disguising the fact that two-thirds of LLL work is on nuclear bombs.

The Labs Conversion Project is a campaign which was initiated by WRL/West in September 1976.

WRL Draft Materials

Don't Go!—the Case for draft registration resistance..... $ .30
Thinking About the Draft—general discussion and analysis of the draft by David McReynolds... $ .25
Hell, No, We Still Won't Go —button..... $ .50
Uncle Sam Wants You Again —three-color Peg Averill poster $1.00
Draft Resistance Organizing Kit —all of the above plus alot more $3.00

Quantity prices available for all items except packet. Write for our price list.

Literature Department
War Resisters League
339 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10012

New Staff for WRL National Office

Susan Pines and Merriel Fish Begin Work in July

By Van Zwisohn

It's been more than six year since the WRL has hired additional staff—it was then that Karl Bissinger, Ed Hedemann, and Grace Hedemann joined the national office.

Since then our organization has seen its workload expand, its program reach out ever further, and the movement of which WRL is so vital a part expand enormously.

These were the factors that prompted the Personnel Committee, after an extensive study, to recommend that the WRL staff be increased by one full time and one part time person. After an extensive search, we think we've added two top-notch people.

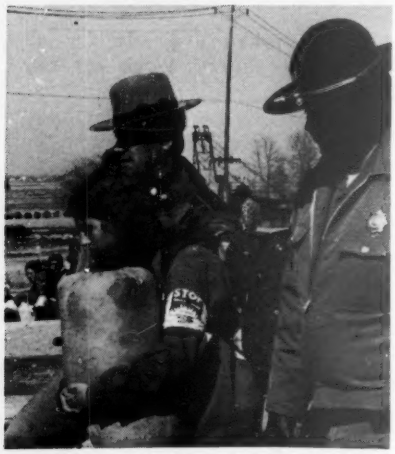
Susan Pines will be leaving the WRL Executive Committee, to which she was recently elected, to become a full time staff member in July. Susan has been an active and productive member of the WRL family for a long time. For five years she was a member of the *WIN* Magazine staff, as well as a participant in many of WRL's direct action projects. For the past two years she has worked at the printing company which produces a lot of WRL's literature.

Susan's professional skills and mature, political commitment make her just the ticket for working on the *WRL News* (which is undergoing some format changes), on production of WRL materials, and new program work. It would have been hard to make a more popular decision. Susan is 28 and is a native of Brooklyn.

Also from Brooklyn, and giving the Brooklyners a majority on the national staff, is **Merriel Fish,** who will be hired as a part time staffer. Merriel brings a variety of skills and wide experience in community organizing. Her primary responsibilities will include WRL's literature service, day-to-day office work and back-up assistance for program staff.

The Executive Committee approved these recommendations at its June 4 meeting, after the present staff had had a chance to review them. We extend a warm welcome to Susan and Merriel and hope their relationship with WRL is a long and mutually happy one.

Van Zwisohn is a member of the WRL Personnel Committee and is Director of the A.J. Muste Memorial Institute.



Susan Pines Seabrook May 1, 1977. Photo by Barbara Strauch

WRL NEWS

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WRL is the U.S. branch of the War Resisters' International, a pacifist organization with affiliates in 18 countries and individuals in more than 80 countries.

Staff: Karl Bissinger
Ralph DiGia
Merriel Fish
Ed Hedemann
Grace Hedemann
David McReynolds
Susan Pines
Igal Roodenko

WRL News (from 1967 on) is available on microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

WRLers Disrupt Armed Forces Day Parade

For the second year in a row, the Armed Forces Day parade up New York City's Fifth Avenue was blocked by members of the New York City WRL local group.

In addition, about 30 members from the newly organized NYC branch of the VVAW held a counter-parade in the opposite direction of the pro-military parade, but on the sidewalk.

As was done last year, the street in front of the reviewing stand was stenciled "Disband the Military." Vicki Rovere, Jacques Williams, Bruce Birnberg, and Walter Goodman were arrested after refusing to leave.

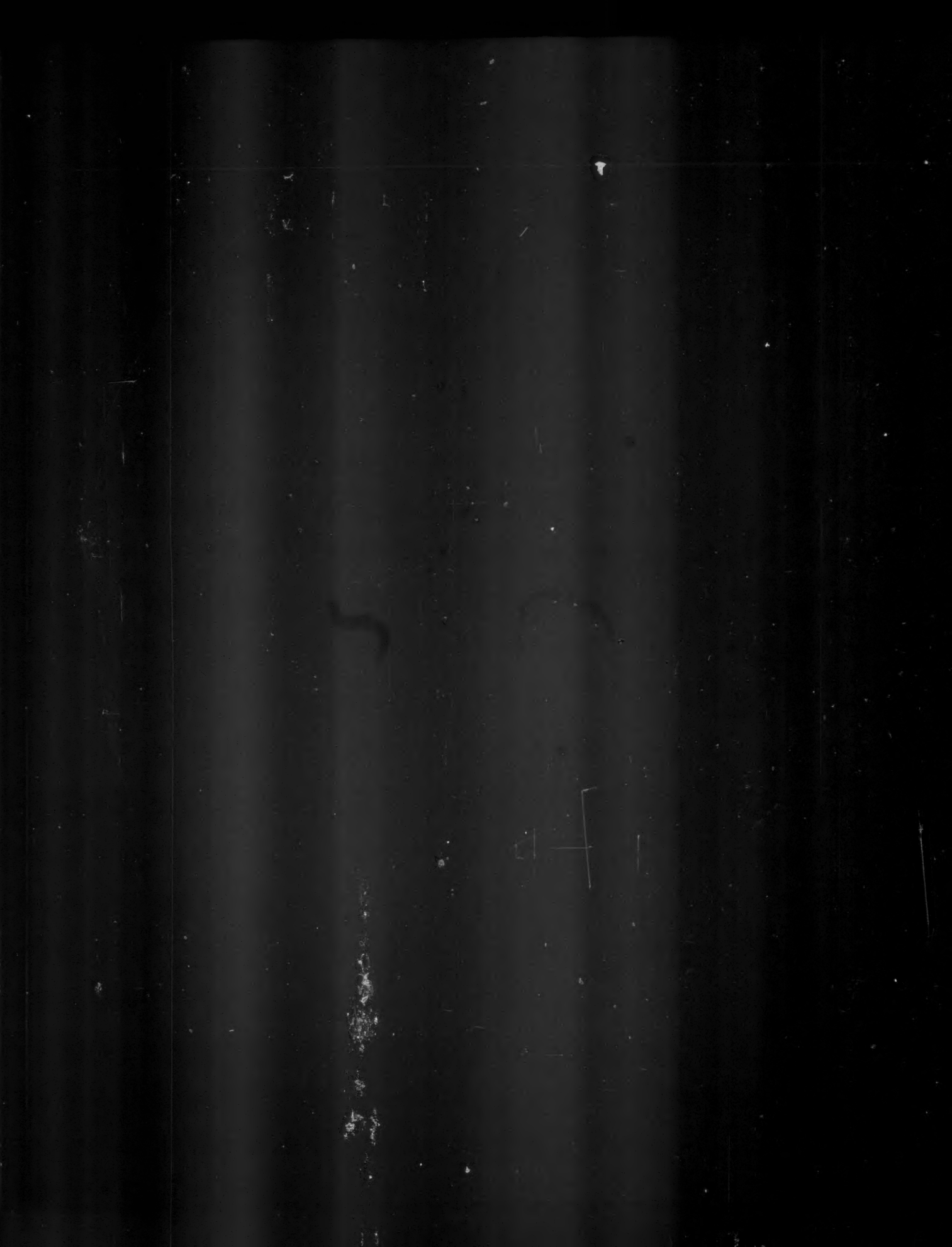
The May 17 parade was the 30th year of Armed Forces Day parades sponsored by—if you can believe it—The Military Order of the World Wars.

WRL Local Groups

NATIONAL OFFICE, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012 (212-228-0450)

REGIONAL OFFICES

WRL/Southeast, 604 West Chapel Hill Street, Durham, NC 27701 (919-682-6374)
WRL/West, 1360 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 (415-626-6976)

LOCAL OFFICES

Albuquerque WRL, 5021 Guadalupe Trail, Albuquerque, NM 87107 (505-344-1140)
Detroit WRL, 1542 West Alexandrine, Detroit, MI 48208 (313-833-3197)
Direct Action Committee/WRL, 2042 East Virginia, Evansville, IN 47711
Foothills WRL, c/o Barbara Alire, 3024 Ross Drive #A-4, Ft. Collins, CO 80521
Hawaii WRL/catholic Action, 1918 University Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822 (808-949-1210)
Morgantown WRL, c/o Sharon Marcus, 912½ Monongahlea Avenue, Morgantown, WV, 26505 (no phone)
New York City WRL, 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012 (no phone)
Oak Park WRL, 645 North Taylor, Oak Park, IL 60302 (312-386-1092)
Philadelphia WRL/WTR, 2208 South Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146 (215-545-4626)
St. Louis WRL, 4556A Oakland Street, St. Louis, MO 63110 (314-533-2234)
Southern California WRL, 966¼ Kensington Road, Los Angeles, CA 90026 (213-629-2998)